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UNCLAS HARARE 000366

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS
NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAQ; HARARE

¶1. Under headline "World must block Bush, Blair's belligerence" the independent daily "The Daily News" carried an op-ed by Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem in which he calls on Arab governments to restrain the United States and Britain from attacking Iraq. Excerpts:

¶2. "There is a kind of fatigue about the imminent Anglo-American attack on Iraq that is the result of media saturation and helplessness. The talk of war, preparations for it and declarations about it have become so much a part of our daily diet for almost a year now that even though the majority of the peoples of the world. . .are opposed to the war. They are so tired of being bombarded by its imminence that many no longer care to read or watch anything to do with the war or simply switch off mentally when they hear 'Iraq.' Consequently, there seems to be a general feeling of 'let them get it over with.' Many people are convinced that there is nothing much that can be done to stop George W. Bush and Tony Blair from attacking Iraq. They are committed to the United Nations track for as long as it grants them the license to destroy Iraq as they are so bent on doing. So the U.N. inspectors, according to London and Washington, have only one function: to get them the evidence they need to finish off Saddam.

" . . .However, amidst all the deceit, frustration and deployment of weapons of mass deception by the Americans and the British, there is an oasis of hope that against all the odds some countries, institutions, peoples and individuals are not being cowed into submission. . . Why can't Bush and Blair be honest enough to say: 'We don't know.' They do not have any evidence that will convince any thinking person but they turn around to accuse doubters of timidity, treachery or giving succor to Saddam Hussein. The choice is not and cannot be between Bush and Saddam. If that be the case it would be limiting human possibilities to their least common factor. . . Whatever is being done in Europe, America and other parts of the world to stop this unjust war will not be successful if the Arab governments, out of their own greed and desperation to hold on to power continue to short-change their people. They voice unease and even opposition to the war while behind closed doors they are giving military and strategic concessions to the Americans. Where are the peace campaigners in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Jordan, Qatar and other Gulf Stations (those are not countries but gas stations!)"

SULLIVAN